

## **PENTECOST: SHARING NEW LIFE IN THE SPIRIT**

**The Day of Pentecost  
May 23, 2010**

**Acts 2:1-21 or Genesis 11:1-9  
Psalm 104:24-34, 35b  
Romans 8:14-17 or Acts 2:1-21  
John 14:8-17**

### **YOU SHALL BE MY WITNESSES**

Why are we here? Why was the Church established? Why do people come to Church? Some folks come to church for the fellowship. Some come to feed on the Word of God, to sit under good preaching. Still others come for the worship experience. There are perhaps what we might consider less spiritual reasons why some people come to Church – those who find the coffee hour after church to be an excellent venue for professionally-related networking or maybe those searching for a life partner. But a truly basic question stands: why does the church exist?

All the reasons just mentioned have some validity and importance, but the great event we remember and celebrate today, Pentecost, takes us to another level of importance. Many have argued that the most important reason we are here and the church exists – the church's highest calling, you might say – is to witness to Jesus Christ, her Lord. Someday we will sit at the feet of Jesus and learn from him directly. We will worship God for all eternity and commune with our Savior and each other. But right now, while we are left here on earth, we are mandated to point to Jesus through both our words and our actions. We are to declare to a lost humanity what we have seen and heard regarding the Savior of the world.

The last thing Jesus said to his followers before ascending into heaven was that they should wait for the coming of the Holy Spirit. With the Spirit's coming, those who believed in the risen and ascended Lord would receive the power necessary to stand tall in a lost world and point in word and deed to Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith.

It is not easy to walk by faith. It is not easy to walk in the opposite direction of those around us who live by other standards. It is not easy to declare Jesus to be the only way to the Father. On our own strength we would go down in defeat. But we are not walking in our own strength. Since Pentecost, believers are walking in the power of the Spirit.

On the Cross Jesus made the payment for our sins. Through his death and resurrection our Lord secured our eternal life. With the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, the church has been granted the power to proclaim the gospel of grace until Jesus comes again. Let us make this day of Pentecost a great day of celebration in the church, but more importantly, let us live in the power of this day, every day, until Jesus returns in glory.

This Reflection for Pentecost Sunday was prepared by the Rev. David Haberer, Pastor of Church for All Nations which reaches out to the world from the heart of New York City. Visit: [www.CFAN.net](http://www.CFAN.net) to learn more about this ministry. Pastor Haberer is an ordained minister with the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod.

**This week we remember to pray for the work of Bible Societies in: Burkina Faso** – with thanks to God for the publication of the Mooré New Testament in Braille and the growing pact of ministry; and with prayers for the implementation of the strategic plan and fundraising program, literacy and translation work, and relationships with churches; **Benin** – with thanks to God for granting national peace and positive relations with churches; and with prayers for guidance in the development of a strategic plan; translation, literacy, distribution, fundraising, audio Scripture work; impact of the new Youth Bible; funding for the completion of Bible House; **Togo** – with thanks giving to God for protection and guidance; and with prayers for unification around the presidential election and the nation’s 50 anniversary; translation work, literacy, HCBH, HIV and AIDS programs.

**Activity Corner:** Pentecost “Prayer Doves”

Supplies needed: Bible; white construction paper (8-1/2” x 11”); dove pattern (approximately 5” x 8”); scissors; pens or pencils; hole puncher; white yarn or string. The dove is considered a symbol for the Holy Spirit based on the Holy Spirit descending like a dove on Jesus at his baptism (Luke 3:22). Invite everyone in your household to trace a dove on a sheet of white construction paper and then cut it out. The Day of Pentecost and the gift of the Holy Spirit empower Christians to tell everyone about Jesus. On one side of the dove, write the words “Holy Spirit” in a language other than English. Assign a different language to each member of your household. Some examples are:  
French Saint-Esprit  
German Heilige Geist  
Greek Pneuma Hagion  
Italian Spirito Santo

Navajo Nilch'i Diyinii  
Norwegian Den Hellige And  
Polish Duchem Swietym  
Portuguese Espirito Santo  
Romanian Duhul Sfint  
Spanish Espiritu Santo  
Swahili Roho Mtakatifu  
Tagalog Espiritu Santo  
Tamil Parisuta Aavi (phonetic spelling)

On the other side of the dove, encourage everyone to write a prayer, thanking God for the gift of the Holy Spirit and listing ways they will tell others about Jesus. Punch a hole at the top of the dove and add yarn or string. Hang the doves where you gather for family devotions and incorporate these prayers into your devotions throughout the week. Read together Genesis 11:1-9 and Acts 2:1-13. Discuss how the Day of Pentecost compares with the “day of confusion.” In what ways is the Acts passage a “reversal” of the Genesis passage? Conclude by singing “There’s a Sweet, Sweet Spirit in This Place,” or one of your favorite Pentecost hymns.